The Calloused Digit

by

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The Purpose & Scope Of Apologetics

Apologetics exists as a field of Christian study to aide the believer in understanding his beliefs, why critics refuse to ascent to these eternal truths, and how these beliefs apply to broader intellectual concerns. Upon hearing of these applications of the discipline, those unfamiliar with such studies might conclude the field to be a subject preoccupied with trivial, esoteric arguments divorced from more pressing issues arising in the course of everyday life.

However, Apologetics does not have to confine itself to the halls of higher education. Apologetics does, in fact, have a role to play in the more popular forms of communication and cultural expression often looked down upon by more traditional academics and clergy.

Many students enrolled in formal degree programs and academic courses of Apologetics no doubt embrace aspirations of serving the Lord in the capacity of a pastor, missionary, or some other form of traditional Christian service. While these students are to be commended for such lofty goals, it must be noted that formalized education in Apologetics can also be good preparation for vocations involving more direct confrontation with the social and cultural realities of the day.

Such an assessment is not a detached observation. Rather it is one derived from my own experience of nearly two decades as a writer of editorial and op-ed commentaries. These efforts began in local newspapers but eventually migrated onto the Internet as that particular technology became more widespread and assessable.

One would not, at first glance, suspect a connection between Apologetics and scathing news analysis. However, Apologetics can serve as as useful tool to get at the ideas and assumptions concealed beneath the theatrics and hoopla surrounding most public issues.

Likewise, the Evangelical might be surprised by the receptivity of many of these public forums to the presentation of the Christian worldview since most believers have grown accustomed to a hostility towards traditional religious perspectives in the mainstream media. The point is not so much for the Christian to expect to anchor the nightly news on one of the major networks but to capitalize on those opportunities made available by new technologies contributing to the democratization of the means of mass communication.

The ability of the Christian to stake a foothold and win at least a modest audience in the tumultuous arena of public debate is predicated on the nature of truth itself. Romans 2:14 says, “Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, since they show that requirements of the law are written on their hearts...”

This reality serves as a gateway to an apologetic utilized by some of the most influential Christian thinkers. Dr. John Warwick Montgomery writes in *The Law Above The Law,* “...the fundamental function of the legal profession is to seek justice by seeking truth. The lawyer endeavors to reduce societal conflicts by arbitrating conflicting truth claims (68).” Similar things could be said of the journalist or columnist as these modern scribes chronicle the events of the day and attempt to relate them to the overall human condition.

Yet the Christian taking the insights of Apologetics into the public debate should not expect things to always go along peachy keen. After all, this is an age whose prevalent outlook of relativism stands in opposition to the absolute claims of the Christian faith. It, therefore, falls to the apologist to show the contemporary unbeliever, acculturated to the temper of these times, the disjunction that exists between what the average non-Christian publicly professes and the stable moral order the heart actually longs for whether the individual fully realizes it or not.

C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* noted that when there is a disagreement between two individuals, “It looks, in fact, very much as if both parties had in mind some Law or Rule of...morality...Quarelling means trying to show that the other man is wrong. And there would be no sense in trying to do that unless (there was) some sort of agreement as to what Right and Wrong are (31-32).” If radical tolerance really was the ultimate principle around which the universe operated, argumentation would be pointless and

perhaps impossible. Alister McGrath writes in *Intellectuals Don't Need God & Other Modern Myths*, "Lewis's point ... is that there is a core of moral constraints underlying human civilization (40)."

The Christian makes the argument for the superiority of his answer by comparing how well Christianity and the competing belief system in question measure up to various tests such as that of systematic consistency and coherence. By this test, the philosophical investigator examines how well the statements within a given worldview logically fit together and how these propositions square with the external facts. In the arena of public debate, this test is carried out by extrapolating from policies and ideas to their ultimate conclusions and how they either help or hinder both the individual and the nation.

For example, Winfred Corduan of Taylor University writes in *No Doubt About It: The Case For Christianity*, "Relativism plays the role of Zorro in the world of knowledge. It stays in concealment for long periods of time only to suddenly appear at crucial moments, conquer the day, and go back into hiding (37)." In other words, relativism might be good for tearing down dogmas, but there is no way an individual can live or a society govern by this perspective consistently. Because with no standard by which to cry "foul", such an ethic naturally degenerates into the strong imposing their arbitrary will upon the weak.

Francis Schaeffer noted in "A Christian Manifesto", "We live in...sociopolitical law. By sociopolitical law we mean law that has no fixed base but law in which a group of people decides what is sociologically good for society ...and what they arbitrarily decide becomes law (41)." So if society needs to kill a few million Jews or experiment on a few million fetuses, who is the average relativist to argue against these kinds of things when these atrocities are couched in the language of the "common good"? There might have been a time when Christians could have ignored the outside world with little peril; but as apologists such as C.S. Lewis, John Warwick Montgomery, and Francis Schaeffer have made know, that day is long gone if it ever existed at all.

Of the gains made by Christians in the discipline of Philosophy over the past several decades, J.P. Moreland says in "Evangelical Apologetics: Selected Essays From The 1995 Evangelical Theological Society Convention", "In spite of these gains, however, it would be misleading to speak as if all were well on the battlefront. There is much work to be done...philosophical apologetics should be focused on those areas of study in which activity is underrepresented...Political and social philosophy would get my vote here (19-29)." This analysis has echoed this sentiment in calling for a Christian voice to address the pertinent issues of the day. This examination also embraces the spirit of Dr. Moreland's comments calling upon apologists not to ignore other forms of popular communication for the most part traditionally overlooked by Christian polemicists, primarily imaginative literature.

Bombarded with an unending twenty-four hour news cycle and conflicting streams of argumentation on nearly every conceivable issue, some overloaded minds simply turn off any alacrity they once had for the absorption of raw facts and refined logic. The desire to be entertained here in the twenty-first century shows few signs of letting up.

John Warwick Montgomery writes in "Neglected Apologetic Styles: The Juridical and The Literary" appearing in the same volume as J.P. Moreland's essay writes, "The...juggernaut of scientific technology has alienated many in our society...Might literary creativity offer a way through this labyrinth? Can literature succeed where other paths have failed (126)?" Unlike rational argumentation, which as to get around tenaciously held objections or what C.S. Lewis referred to as "watchful dragons", stories have a way of infiltrating the defenses of the mind before one realizes what is happening (McGrath, 198).

The success of this approach is not predicated, however, upon literature for literature's sake. For although packaged in the regalia of high adventure, sympathetic characters and compelling settings, to literary sophisticates John Warwick Montgomery observes in "Myth, Allegory & Gospel", "Chesterton, Lewis, Tolkien display...an infuriating combination or ingenuousness and genius. On the other hand, no 20th century writers in the English-speaking world have had such an ... extensive impact on the intelligentsia in the sphere of ultimate commitment (14)." Of Tolkien, Montgomery admits that some say of this fantasist that he "...limits his imagery to the symbols of Celtic and medieval myth and the verities of the Christian tradition that in the judgment of a recent critic ...'his earnest vision seems syncretistic, his structure a collage, and his feeling antiquarian.'. (14)." Y*et The Lord Of The Rings* has been heralded as the greatest novel of the twentieth century and the cinematic adaptations set in this imaginary realm are the box office hit of any Christmas season.

What these tales do is tap into a fund of themes,

ideas, and images etched upon the human mind and soul. Lewis himself reflected upon the theories of Jung and Tolkien to account for the appeal of these timeless narratives. Jung believed that myths and fantasies verbalize symbols universal to the human psyche. Tolkien Christianized this idea when he said as quoted in Myth, *Allegory & Gospel,* "The Gospels contain...a story of a larger kind which embraces all of the essences of fairy stories (117)." John Warwick Montgomery further expounds, "To Tolkien and Lewis, tales such as *The Chronicles Of* Narnia can...serve as pointers to...Christian Redemption. Moreover, they will establish in the heart of the sensitive reader an appreciation of and a longing for the Christian story (118)." This technique works because, as Romans 1:20 informs, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities --- his eternal power and divine nature --- have been clearly seen so that men are without excuse (NIV)." Thus, each human being's inbuilt curiosity regarding God and eternal things pops up in regards to the stories of good and evil so prevalent in contemporary popular culture.

With such names as Lewis and Tolkien attached to it, the average Christian might feel unworthy of employing an apologetic having grown synonymous with classical literature for fear of not properly honoring it. However, even those unlikely of ever penning a timeless epoch for the ages can still use speculative narrative to stimulate the imagination in the direction of religious truth. In fact, one does not even have to adorn the tale in the traditional medieval fantasy motifs popularized by this format since the underlying concepts being presented are much more important than the external trappings and regalia.

Though it might seem a bit clichéd now in light of the popularity of Left Behind and the crop of other End Times novelizations that popped up at the turn of the millennium, in a creative writing class during college I wrote a short story incorporating certain elements of a literalist eschatology such as the Rapture, the Mark of the Beast and Christian Redemption and placed them in a literary setting incorporating elements of the techno-thriller and police-state genres. The story was surprisingly well-received by a state university audience. Some of the students were kind enough to rank it among the best in the class.

It has been said that those who can, do; those who cannot, teach. Likewise, in the literary world, those who can, write; those who cannot, criticize. Among those Christians who enjoy imaginative adventures but lack the creativity to craft their own speculative worlds there is more than ample opportunity to relate the symbols found in these narratives to Biblical truths. Some might consider it bizarre to comb science fiction and fantasy for parallels in Christian thought. Silly as it seems, it is not without precedence among secular academics to examine this kind of material through the analytical lenses of their own respective disciplines.

Such efforts have given rise to a group of semi-popular works one might classify as "Star Trek Studies". One such volume entitled *The Ethics Of Star Trek* by Judith Barad, head of the Department of Philosophy at Indiana State University, examines the moral dilemmas confronted by these beloved characters created by the late Gene Roddenberry. It would, therefore, be just as legitimate to probe and analyze programs such as "Babylon 5", "Stargate", "Battlestar Galatica", and "Doctor Who" as a form of apologetic outreach to an overlooked segment of the population, namely science fiction enthusiasts. The *Blackwell Philosophy & Pop Culture Series* already does something similar from the standpoint of secular philosophy.

II Corinthians 10:3-4 says, "...we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses (NAS)." The Scripture acknowledges that the children of God are at war. In this conflict, it would not be strategically sound to have all the participants engaged in the same kind of combat. The army fights on the land, the navy on the sea. Still other agencies such as the CIA gather intelligence for the other branches and engage in other assorted activities not exactly fitting the mission profiles of the other services. Likewise, it is the mission of the apologist to gather information of the conditions outside of the Church and to relay that knowledge back to the body of Christ and to go into places where a pastor might not be accepted or appreciated.

How Low Ought The Christian To Go?

A Facebook posting of Ligonier Ministries' Tabletalk Magazine admonishes "If we feel lowly as believers, we should not fight this sense. We are the people made glad by news of our weakness."

But the question must be asked for the sake of protection "To what extent?"

For couldn't this state of awareness be indoctrinated so that no one will think they are worthy of questioning those running a congregation or ministry organization living like fat cats while fostering deprivation and even abuse among those from whom those in power derive benefit?

There is also a point where what one perceives as a sense of humility can warp back on itself and can prevent the individual from enjoying the good things God provides in this world and using these things in the pursuit of accomplishment.

Apparently the author of that Tabletalk remark thought himself not only good enough for his own reflections to be pondered by others but to also attach his byline to them.

Racial Propagandist Compares Trump To Revolutionary Terrorists

In an interview, Jorge Ramos insisted that Donald Trump's "words are dangerous and his ideas extreme."

But aren't those of Ramos even more so if a sovereign nation ought to be denied the power to determine when the conditional privilege of enter may be extended and when deleterious foreign elements need to be expelled?

In reflection of his expulsion from the press conference, this propagandist compared this treatment to that endured by dissidents in Marxist dictatorships such as Cuba or Venezuela.

Did the tolerancemongers pounce all over these remarks in criticism the way that they do whenever a conservative analyst or commentator likens a particular government action or policy to something that transpired under the auspices of other historically infamous tyrannies?

Security Database Scope

Ben Carson's proposal of the government having a database of all immigrants is more acceptable than Donald Trump's that there be one composed of Muslims.

For if there is one dedicated to identifying Muslims, what is to prevent one from being compiled listing Christians holding to the soteriological exclusivity of their professed faith or that believe valid marriage is only between a man and a woman?

Regarding Carson's proposal, to be here legitimately, immigrants are supposed to possess the proper paperwork to begin with.

So what is so out of line with the government keeping systematized tabs on such information?

How is this appreciably worse than legitimate citizens being saddled with a Social Security number nearly as soon as they slide out of the birth canal?

Would Master Of Macabre Speak As Ill Of Islam?

In a Tweet, ardent Christ-despiser Stephen King remarked, "Hating all Muslims for what happened in Paris is like hating all Christians because of the gay-hating Westboro Baptist Church."

On the surface, one can't fault the beloved author for what he posted. But when was the last time a narrative linked to Stephen King's imaginative mind featured a prominent Islamic antagonist?

On the other hand, a significant percentage of his stories feature a villain depicting the dark undersides and shortcomings of characters professing Christianity.

What Was So Wrong With The White Wizard Of Oz?

Regarding the musical The Wiz, shouldn't that be condemned as the cultural misappropriation of the original Wizard of Oz?

Matt Lauer described "The Wiz" as the Wizard of Oz in an African-American context.

So does that mean that instead of Dorothy trying to reach the Wizard in the Emerald City to get home, it is about Dorquesha trying to get to the administrator in the social services office to file a complaint about her dead beat "baby's daddy's" failure to pay child support?

Pastors Needing To Get Somewhere Run All Over The Congregation

In a blog post at ChristianPost, it said that the most common reason a pastor leaves a church is because the pastor believes that they have taken a church as far as they can.

From the assorted scandals that erupt nearly constantly, I would have assumed it was because the pastor couldn't keep his hands off other men's wives or even underage minors.

But on a more serious note, why is it that a church has to necessarily "go anywhere".

Isn't it enough that people show up each week, politely listen to the sermon, drop a few dollars into the collection plate, and wash and repeat the next week?

A pastor saying that they have to take a church as far as they can sounds like a pronouncement uttered from atop a dangerous precipice.

Primarily, it sounds like a pastor is willing to stomp all over a congregation in order to make a name for himself.

In such a situation as a member of the congregation or regular attender, if you don't go along with the pastor's outlandish schemes, you are made out to be some kind of dangerous subversive.

Slow and steady wins the race.

If you find yourself in a congregation where the church needs to "go somewhere", you might very easily find yourself in the jungles of Latin America where the unsuspecting before they realize it are forced to line up to take the "spicy Kool Aid" whether they really want to or not.

Catholic Media Invokes Christmas Imagery To Manipulate Refugee Policy

In the attempt to play on Christian sympathies at Christmas time, the National Catholic Register has posted a story titled, "No Room At The Inn, Why So Few Syrian Refugees Come To America".

Firstly, the only ones that can be blamed for that are those that formulate the admissions policy.

Most Americans aren't held in much higher esteem by the secret society elites that run the upper echelons of the State Department and related agencies than the refugees applying for entrance.

It is doubtful your State Department gives a hoot what you think.

If the agency had it's way, those that run the place would probably like nothing better than to implement Prince Philip's proposal of systematic depopulation in the most diplomatic way possible where you would end up thanking them for doing you a favor in terminating your existence.

Secondly, Roman authorities ordered the swarms of whom Mary and Joseph ranked to report to their ancestral lands.

The United States did not compel the dispossessed to flock here only to slam the door in their face.

There is not a constitutional obligation to let them in.

Thirdly, enough with badmouthing what transpired at the inn after all these centuries.

How do we not know that the beds there weren't filled by other pregnant women also on the verge of giving birth or perhaps even elderly in nearly as much agony as Mary might have been?

Even if Mary had made a fuss that she was carrying the Redeemer, without angelic intervention to verify, why ought she have necessarily been believed in the first place?

Jihadist Sympathizers Oppose Commonsense Migration Policy

Former Vice President Dick Cheney said Donald Trump's proposed ban on Muslims "Goes against everything we stand for."

Is it against everything that Americans that actually work for a living stand for or merely everything the prevailing globalists wanting to enslave humanity in a New World Order stand for?

Of course Cheney is opposed to any curtailment of immigration.

He needs access to a steady supply of cheap transplant organs.

As an advocate for an interventionist foreign policy, Dick Cheney justified that on the grounds of standing against belligerent Islam.

So why is it do we want those of that particular persuasion to be allowed the opportunity to overwhelm our borders in their mission to spread violence?

Dick Cheney wasn't the only public figure or media personality to get swept up in the anti-Trump frenzy. One particular Yahoo headline approvingly intoned "Muslims decry Donald Trump's comments."

Too bad the adherents of that particular errant theology aren't as eager to denounce the violence of their coreligionists.

According to J.K. Rowling, Voldemort (the antagonist in her Harry Potter Series) was nowhere near as bad as Donald Trump.

What she is saying is that outright murder (which Voldermort committed against Harry's parents as well as numerous other characters throughout the series in case Rowling has forgotten) is apparently not as bad as exercising one's First Amendment Rights in a politically incorrect manner.

Speaking to the issue on The Five on Fox News, Juan Williams articulated his agreement with Hillary Clinton that Donald Trump's suspicions of Muslims are reprehensible.

So will Juan Williams also now admit that National Public Radio was correct in condemning his own verbalized reservations about explicit Muslims?

Juan Williams remarked in response to Donald Trump's remarks that fearmongering and demagoguery sell.

What, sort of like the current occupant of the Oval Office, applauded along with Williams and throngs of brainwashed drones, for accomplishing little more than emerging from his mother's birth canal as half Black?

Trump's proposal to ban Muslim citizens from reentering the United States might go a step too far.

However, forbidding the entrance of residents of specific countries is not beyond the bounds of propriety.

The United States exists primarily for the benefit of those categorized as actual Americans.

We should be the ones to determine the criteria by which immigrants will be admitted and not the other way around with foreigners dictating these terms.

Legalist's Alternatives To Christmas Even Less Biblical Than Disputed Holiday

In his condemnation of Christmas, Pastor Jason Cooley suggests that parents in general and fathers in particular not impose an outright prohibition against the holiday cold turkey.

Instead, the minister suggests it might be better to phase things out gradually over time.

If so, then what is so wrong with these traditions and practices to begin with?

Applying this methodology to other so called "sins", instead of dropping his three extra wives all at once, would the polygamist be allowed to release them back into the singles pool one at a time in elimination ceremonies reminiscent of the tribal council on Survivor?

Or what if someone has a mistress?

Is it being suggested that instead of romping with her three times per week, that the philanderer merely cut back to once per week for a whole followed by a period where she is still wined and dined but simply not bedded before the relationship is cut off entirely?

In his opposition to Christmas, Pastor Jason Cooley on a SermonAudio podcast remarked how he was trying to get his church to fast that day.

However, isn't elevating that to an implied obligation just as pagan or Romanish as the other traditions that this fanatic rails against?

For even if Baptists of this hardline variety insist that what they are doing is voluntary, the authenticity of your individual faith will be drawn into question if you fail to hop on board and go along with them.

Matthew 6:17-18 says, "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and they Father, which seeth in

secret, shall reward thee openly."

If a church body has the authority to shame or guilt trip people into semi-compulsory fasts, what's so wrong with the season of Lent?

And is not one of the condemnations of Christmas that no human, only God, has the authority to implement a mandatory religious observance such as a festival or holy day?

Terrorist Attacks Prompt Church To Downplay Its Open Border Homilies

In response to the terrorist attack in Paris, Pastor William Strum of Berean Baptist Church in Fayetteville, NC remarked how dumb a nation had to be to grant entrance to swarms of refugees.

Both he and Senior Pastor Sean Harris suggested that the approach of targeting specific Jihadist leaders and cells would ultimately be doomed to failure.

Rather, the Western World must consider eliminating significant swaths of the Islamic population.

Yet in a SermonAudio podcast uploaded a little over a week prior to these remarks that addressed Hungary's refusal to admit Islamic refugees, Pastor Strum declared that, as a minister of the Gospel, that he would teach that these infidel indigents should be allowed entrance since it is our obligation to be more "Christian" than "American".

Pastor Strum was previously so sure of his position regarding this issue that he announced in the podcast that he was requiring the students in his world religion class to write a paper on the Christian approach to immigration.

In Christian school jargon, that means the essay will likely be graded down if the approach taken by the student is not in agreement with the personnel opinion of the instructor.

Apart from not machine gunning down without warning those violating our borders without permission, the primary obligation of the American government is to protect actual Americans first and foremost.

If a nation decides not to admit a single immigrant, a society has fulfilled any so-called Christian obligation.

Tyrant Pastors Insist Congregations To Be Viewed Like Dimwitted Children

In an examination of alleged rebellion in the church, Pastor Jason Cooley compared rebellion in the sacred assembly to rebellion within the context of the biological family.

As an example, the pastor provided the illustration of a husband telling his wife to do one thing while the wife responds how she feels led by the Lord to go in another direction.

But provided that either alternative is equally godly, wouldn't a loving husband take into consideration what the wife had to say and perhaps in many instances even defer to her suggestion?

So why wouldn't a pastor worthy of respect as such do similarly?

Rev. Cooley insists that, since such indolence would not be tolerated in the home, it should be just as quickly punished in the church.

Pastors insisting that they should be obeyed without question or hesitation like a parent in general and a father in particular need to be reminded of a fundamental assumption that cannot really be altered.

That is you have no say into what family you are born; however, an adult is perfectly free to up and leave any church in which they do not feel that they are being respected as a free human being.

This legalistic pastor admonished in this same homily posted at SermonAudio that one cannot have a foot in what would be considered a strict congregation in terms of the expectations imposed upon the members and the other foot outside in terms of refusing to relent to pastoral obedience.

So does Cooley intend to bestow a blessing upon those that depart such congregations to attend those that still adhere to essential Christian doctrine but which do not deem it necessary to clamp down so tightly regarding secondary matters?

Or will he hint at Hellfire in the attempt to frighten people from looking for more psychologically or methodologically balanced churches?

In this sermon, Pastor Cooley also criticized those that set out to establish churches on their own without proper authority.

By that, does that mean he intends to repent of being a schismatic and to return to the Roman Catholic Church?

Naive Religionists Eager To Find Shackles Under Their Nonsectarian Commemorative Photosynthesizing Lifeform

The scene is a classic one in terms of cinema. Depicted is an army defending its position with muskets or rifles drawn as the adversary marches steadily closer. To maintain awareness of the situation, a commanding officer reminds those under his authority to remain steady and not to fire until explicitly ordered to do so. Inevitably with the tension so thick, a trigger will release and a weapon fires before the desired moment.

Observers of America's cultural situation witnessed something similar in the developments that unfolded surrounding the 2015 Starbuck's Christmas cup. For whatever reason, the purveyor of shockingly overpriced caffeinated beverages decided to go with a plain red cup unadorned by any additional ornamentation with the exception of the company's mermaid logo. Absent were the snowflakes or decorations of Christmas cups past.

Christian Evangelist Joshua Feuerstein responded that this design alteration was akin to removing Christ from the celebration of His birth. Most Christians shrugged off such a reaction with a laugh or two, remarking that they really didn't care as they never purchased a $7.00 cup of coffee in the first place and weren't about to begin doing so now.

Others such as Lutheran theologian Chris Roseborough reflected that it is the duty of actual Christians rather than retailers to take the true meaning of the holiday to the broader unbelieving world. Still others such as Southern Seminary President and former Southern Baptist functionary Richard Land assured that there will indeed be a boycott of Starbucks nevertheless just to assure the captains of commerce that conservative Christians are still capable of exerting economic influence.

Yet an additional perspective contends that, since lack of a snowflake on a red cup has got to be the flimsiest of evidence of a war against Christmas that one could come up with, that must mean the war against Christmas must be about as real as flying reindeer. However, children born the day I published my first column regarding the effort to undermine Christmas are now nearly old enough to legally spike their eggnog.

These deprivations of liberty and subversions of culture have occurred with such regularity that I was able to assemble a sufficient number of these holiday-themed columns into my first book published in 2006 titled “Yuletide Terror & Other Holiday Horrors” and am well on my way to completing an even longer sequel. Among these apparently non-existent incidents ranked students denied the opportunity to attend a performance of “The Christmas Carol” because of the work's holiday-specific content, municipalities terrified to refer to their celebratory greenery by the traditional nomenclature, and students forbidden from distributing to classmates something as simple as a candy cane accompanied with a card interpreting the confection's origin from a religious perspective.

Even more disturbing than either Christians that don't celebrate Christmas over objections as to what they perceive as the holiday's questionable origins or outright unbelievers wanting to censor the Gospel message because of the offense of the cross comes an additional outlook that is apparently aroused by the prospect of cultural subjugation. This particular viewpoint was articulated in a ChristianPost column titled “Why Christians Should Lose The Christmas Culture War” by Jared Byas.

Of his particular bias, Mr. Byas writes, “For me, defending God means letting go of 'Merry Christmas' so my non-Christian neighbors feel respected when I invite them to the holiday table. For me, keeping Christ in Christmas is not about winning the culture war --- but about losing it.”

If that is how Jared Byas gets his Christmas jollies, that is his own business. But just because his mental lights exhibit the symptoms of a loose bulb, there is no reason the remainder of us must also.

If your neighbor is such a burro excretory orifice that they have a mental breakdown at the sight of religious symbols or even decorations where the religious meaning might not be quite as obvious, is there really much of a point in inviting them to this hypothesized nonsectarian holiday table? If we are to gradually set aside the traditions that characterize this particular season, perhaps the first to go is pretending to care about those that you barely give the time of day to the remainder of the year.

It might be one thing to tone down one's in your face religiosity in the attempt to reach out to an acquaintance overtly hostile towards true spirituality. However, this attitude of abject surrender is not without profound consequences.

Those such as Jared Byas elevating nicety to the status of something akin to the Prime Directive from Star Trek have failed to realize that God establishes

different missions or objectives for what are conceived of as the distinct social spheres or what might be referred to as orders of creation in Augustinian theology. For example, Romans 13:3-4 stipulates, “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil...For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain for he is the minister God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. (KJV).”

However, for someone that is thought of as a traditional minister in terms of church office that administers the sacraments or delivers the public proclamation of God's Word to draw a sword to settle an acrimonious debate on what color the new carpet in the sanctuary would be or to resolve a heated doctrinal disagreement in Sunday school class would be for such a pastor to overstep the boundaries of appropriate authority.

Translated in terms of the Christmas issue, it might be in good taste that, if you invite the adherent of another faith over for Christmas, you don't berate them up one end and down the other as to the shortcomings of their errant belief unless they first proceed to attack you in like manner. However, a culture or nation cannot necessarily afford to be as lenient in terms of its standards and foundational assumptions.

For example, those that do not share in the assumption that values Christmas as a cherished celebration should be allowed to verbalize that they do not, articulate the reasons why, and pretty much allowed to continue along in their affairs without bodily harm or without fear of such to an extent that a person steeped in a common sense realism would deem sufficiently reasonable.

However, that does not mean that the majority that value, celebrate, and derive meaning from the comprehensive narrative source from which Christmas is derived should be required to cower in silence for fear of upsetting those that do not or of receiving punishment for having done so.

In the attempt to position themselves as profoundly pious, it is quite evident that some fail to comprehend the full implications of what they are actually advocating. Jared Byas writes, “For me, keeping the Christ in Christmas is not about winning the culture war --- but about losing it.”

As in any conflict, sometimes the battles go on for so long and become so acrimonious that the involved parties can end up forgetting that for which they are fighting. The term “culture war” gained widespread notoriety in Pat Buchanan's speech at the 1992 Republican convention. In the address, the political analyst and former presidential candidate gave rhetorical voice to the proverbial Silent Majority noticing then that the embrace of progressivism and permissiveness on the part of various institutions such as academia, media and government was resulting in symptoms of noticeable decline throughout American culture and society.

Therefore, in calling for a surrender in the culture war those of the viewpoint shared by Mr. Byas think that what they are calling for is a truce on the part of all parties to simply play nice on the part of all parties irrespective of creed. What they are inadvertently giving the green light to is an anything goes mentality that will eventually result in the worst depravities and possibly even atrocities imaginable.

The veracity of this observation is already playing itself out in regards to the gay marriage issue. After standing up for years against the steady drumbeat to normalize this particular moral corrosion, many sincere Christians finally relented. They essentially said, “Fine, go ahead and do as you please in the privacy of your own bedroom. Just don't expect the remainder of us to stand around applauding in approval.”

This armistice of don't ask don't tell did not last long in terms of history's lengthy reach. For throughout this unfolding cultural revolution, the propagandists and social engineers insisted that the love between a couple of any combination imaginable was not dependent upon a piece of paper. But nearly as soon as those attempting to order their thoughts and their lives in compliance with the sanctified and the holy began to make peace with the fact that much of society was going to recognize such unnatural couplings as perfectly ordinary, additional blows were landed by the ephors of the judiciary that those objecting to the solemnization of wanton carnality would also be required to render the legal equivalent of acceptance and adulation.

In a court ruling upholding the right of conscience for the marrying couple but apparently not for the objecting merchant, a baker was threatened with financial ruination and the profound psychological trauma resulting from such for doing little more than refusing to bake a cake for a wedding that the baker believed to be an abomination in the eyes of God and for a couple not even likely to remain faithful to one another within the next couple of years anyway. Libertines will snap why can't the baker just go ahead and bake the cake? Traditionalists can retort why

can't the couple simply find another baker (which shouldn't be too difficult given that those of the couple's boudoir proclivities are often quite skilled in those crafts requiring a creative flair).

So what other freedoms and liberties is Jared Byas willing to surrender when he hoists the white flag in the culture war? Edmund Burke admonished that all it takes for evil to win is for good men to do nothing. At the University of Mississippi, not only has the word "Christmas" been banned because it "connoted too much Christianity on campus" but so has the traditional color combination of red and green, having been replaced with red, blue, and silver. Commissars at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville decreed that in the future staff and student organizations must eliminate all religious themes and cultural allusions associated with designated celebration periods commonly referred to as holidays. But do such acts of censorship also apply to Muslim or secularist Jewish populations as well?

One waits with anticipation to hear of the commencement of orgies and human sacrifice. Think that remark goes a little too far?

It must be pointed out that the Nazis were also big on removing Christ and Christmas in favor of generic winter celebrations venerating nature, the state, and the COMMUNITY. As to the orgies, the University of Mississippi has changed the name of its celebration from the festive yet dignified "Grand Ole Christmas" to "Hotty Totty Holidays". And with a name like that bringing to mind drunkenness and lewd behavior, academic administrators will still gawk on dumbfounded and flabbergasted at the expansion of the alleged rape culture supposedly reaching epidemic proportions on campuses across the country.

From the way Byas formulates his argument, it is assumed that insisting that the existence of Christmas be recognized is an inherently selfish act. This is evident in the phrase ...laying down my demand that the coffee shop I share with my non-Christian neighbors 'privilege' my religion." The word "privilege" was no doubt deliberately selected in the attempt to link this issue with the revolutionary fervor of the Black Lives Matter movement with its constant drum beat of "White privilege" in the hopes of eroding resistance to increasingly extravagant demands.

But are the motives for demanding a generalized respect for Christmas necessarily an either/or dichotomy between selfishness and altruism? Why can't it be a little bit of each?

In *The Wealth Of Nations*, Scottish economist Adam Smith hypothesized that it was through the enlightened self-interest of numerous individuals making decisions on behalf of their own particular needs and desires that the great invisible hand was able to manifest the will of providence. This particularly brought about the distribution of a finite quantity of goods and services.

However, this theory can just as properly be applied to a Christian approach to the controversy surrounding the Christmas issue. In his call for abdication along this front in the culture war, Jared Byas believes that he is upholding the Biblical admonition to esteem others more highly than ourselves. And that principle does indeed have a place in adjudicating the relationship between specific individuals.

For example, if someone wishes you "Happy Holidays" rather than "Merry Christmas" and they seem sincere in their extension of the sentiment, there is no need to go "Old Testament" upon them calling down holier than thou condemnation in how you go out of your way to maintain the theological formalities of the holiday. Such stridency might do more harm than help in advancing the cause of Christ.

However, what about addressing the attempts of unbelievers demanding that their own animosity towards traditional expressions of religion be granted a place of privilege so militant that in order to be satisfied an entire civilization is expected to lay down in what amounts to ritualized suicide? Therefore, provided one goes about it in a levelheaded manner, each time that you speak out against a censorship or deprivation of Christmas even if as little as letting someone know how much these radical activists tick you off, you are not being selfish.

You are in fact defending the right of someone else to enjoy Christmas unabashed in compliance with their particular convictions. Even more importantly, you are also lighting a candle against a pending Dark Age bent on plunging the world into an engulfing and pervasive tyranny.

Why Study Philosophy?

Because of its reputation as an esoteric field thanks to areas within the broader discipline concerned with matters barely connected with everyday life, many ask, "Why study philosophy?" when confronted with the subject. Related to this are concerns and reservations raised by many sincere Christians regarding this area of study because of luminaries such as Friedrich Nietzsche and Karl Marx who used their formidable cognitive abilities to undermine the Judeo-Christian framework of Western civilization.

But in reality, philosophy can be a powerful tool capable of helping the Christian to better comprehend God's universe and to fulfill their Scriptural obligations as salt of the earth. In *Introduction To Philosophy: A Christian Perspective*, Norman Geisler provides the reader with a number of reasons why the study of philosophy is useful beyond the exercise of mental abilities (20-22).

For starters, philosophy can aide the individual in understanding human society. Though many fail to realize it, philosophical issues are found at the base of civilized life and how a populace approaches these issues will determine the very quality of life enjoyed throughout society.

For example, does a woman's right to reproductive choice outweigh the human rights of the tiny life growing within her? Or, is it just to discriminate against those who have done no wrong in order to benefit the descendants of those who have faced historic injustices even though these descendants currently enjoy a considerable degree of equality?

It has been said that America is the only nation based on a set of ideas rather than an accident of geography. Those seeking to solve these complex social issues had better offer justification beyond the brute power of the state if delicately balanced liberties are to remain intact.

Professor Geisler also points out that philosophy with its emphasis on clear thought can help liberate the individual from provincialism and clarify the meaning of Scripture. Many times what the Church considers holy writ are in fact human accretions added on for whatever reason. These might be legitimate or mere grabs at power whose origins have been forgotten in the distant past.

Besides assisting the Church in sifting between what is God's directive and man's opinion, legitimate philosophical inquiry can elucidate the holy reasoning behind a number of divine decrees. For example, through the application of reason and analysis, one can deduce that the Biblical dictates forbidding adultery are in fact rules set down by a loving Father rather than by a deity seeking to be a cosmic wet blanket.

It would be an accurate analogy to compare history's philosophical giants with the great military leaders of the past. Just as aspiring military officers study the strategies and tactics of these figures for the purposes of perfecting their own craft in order to defeat their battlefield adversaries, Christians must know their own opponents in the arena of ideas so that they might win souls for Christ and to retake social territories in the culture war (or at least prevent the loss of additional intellectual or moral ground).

For those turned off by military analogies and comparisons, John Warwick Montgomery suggested that the apologist must soak up the ideology of his day in a fashion not unlike a missionary learning a foreign language in order to communicate with those spiraling down the path towards eternal damnation. Philosophy, rightly applied, can be an immense help in the accomplishment of this task, especially when so much of contemporary thought is an eclectic mishmash of Nietzschean, Darwinian and Marxist ideology. With even a passing familiarity with philosophy, one is able to realize how many blows are struck at human liberty simply through poorly defined phrases and concepts.

II Corinthians 10:5 says, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ." For too long assorted factions within the Church have sought to sanctify their own ignorance. As a result, culture is reaping a harvest of bloodshed, blasphemy and disbelief.

It must be realized that God is the God of all creation, including philosophy when built upon a solid foundation. If Charlie Church is to reach out to Phil Philosophy, he must do so by showing that this field rightly divided also points back to the creator and sustainer of all things.

Random Observations

In his oration at a global forum on the environment, President Obama insisted that the greatest threat to the climate is cynicism. Does he intend to curb that emission as well?

As often as he is absent from the airwaves and that the third hour of his program is a rebroadcast of the first hour, on what grounds does Michael Savage criticize those that take time off around Thanksgiving?

President Obama is suggesting that the border between Syria and Turkey be sealed. If it is acceptable to call for the sealing of that border, why not the one between the United States and Mexico?

From the pulpit, a minister poked fun of the elderly women at his former pastorate that became noticeably upset at a young woman wearing a short skirt that showed up to witness an infant dedication. But weren't those senior saints merely reflecting how they had probably been instructed for decades from the pulpit such as by that pastor's own documented tirades opposing women wearing pants? Pants are usually more modest that a skimpy skirt.

Regarding these refugees that have sewn their mouths shut in protest until they are granted entry into Europe, is socialized medicine also expected to pick up the tab to surgically correct such deliberate acts of self-mutilation?

At the Paris environmental summit, Prince Charles panicked that the actions we take now will determine the fate of the planet in terms of ecology. But is he so troubled that he will surrender his fleet of luxury automobiles and his mother her multiple palaces and as many corgis? Or is deprivation and sacrifice something to be imposed upon the classes of humanity from less polluted gene pools?

Obama panicked regarding fish swimming in the streets of Miami. But isn't that the occasional chance you take building a city essentially on a sandbar?

A headline regarding the social services center shooting in California read “FBI Unable To Determine If Terrorism Involved.” Will this determination render the victims any more or less dead?

Jim Bakker is blaming his fall into sin on witches conspiring against him. I guess the encounter with Jessica Hahn was merely a physically rigorous exorcism and the laying on of hands.

The song connected with Christmas “Let There Be Peace On Earth & Let It Begin With Me” might be a noble aspiration. However, the terrorist assault on San Bernadino proves how lyrically vapid the tune is so long as there are at least two that disagree with the sentiment.

On WMAL's “Mornings On The Mall”, host Larry O'Connor referenced Donald Trump's interview with Alex Jones but would not bring himself to enunciate the name “Alex Jones” because O'Connor does not support the so-called conspiracy theories emphasized by Alex Jones. So does Larry O'Connor disrespect in the same manner every other media personality or public figure with whom he happens to disagree?

An interfaith forum was held in Northern Virgina for the purposes of preventing hate crimes against Muslims and Sikhs. Maybe the Sikhs get a bad deal at times. But interesting how such forums don't really give a flip about crimes committed against Jews and especially Christians.

President Obama and Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton urge a strategy of engagement with ISIS counseling that America offend the terrorist organization as least as possible. As such, will they condemn scantily clad women in the media and reverse their approval of gay marriage?

President Obama, how is altering the mission of NASA from that of exploring space to being an outreach effort to Muslims working for the country?

Shouldn't Obama's propagandists like Josh Earnest (whose name is a synonym for “Confirmed Liar”) be the last to say a candidate ought to be disqualified from office for undermining the Constitution?

The Countryside Voice, a publication part of the Campaign To Protect Rural England, lamented on the cover of its winter 2015 issue, “Why rural poverty is going unacknowledged”. Probably because that's not where the deadbeats live that murder British soldiers along the side of the road and then post agitprop videos still drenched in blood.

In a criticism of what he categorized as a narcissistic

variety of esigesis, Lutheran theologian Chris Roseborough spoofed pastors that gleaned Old Testament narratives for illustrations or metaphors to assist believers through the challenges in their own lives. For example, facing our own Goliaths. But unless such passages are presented in such a light, are they really all that pertinent to the life of the individual? Ancient Semitic battle narratives don't really float most people's boats to any significant extent.

Pastor Jason Cooley insisted that Baptists should avoid Christmas because it is "Rome's holiday", meaning the Roman Catholic Church. Does that mean Baptists should also avoid the Catholic Church's savior as well? For despite that denomination's shortcomings, they still advocate a Trinitarian Christology.

In his condemnation of Christmas, Pastor Cooley observed if the holiday is really about Christ, don't spend any money and see what happens. He suggested that children raised on Christmas would break down crying. In other words, the scene wouldn't be too much different than the way pastors claiming that they aren't in it for the money and that insist God always provides toss a fit when the offering is down.

Jeb Bush quipped does Donald Trump get his foreign policy advice from the Saturday or Sunday shows? However, one of the most informative geopolitcal primers I ever saw was the G.I. Joe cartoon from the 1980's.

Hillary Clinton proclaimed that "mass shooting" is a term that we should not have to teach the meaning of to our children. Does she intend to be as forcefully principled regarding the carnal debauchery sweeping over society such as gay marriage?

What Constitutes Substantial Threat When Curtailing Second Amendment Rights?

A Maryland commission on firearms suggested that guns should be removed from the homes of those accused of making a "substantial threat".

Most would assume that would consist of saying things like "I plan to shoot Such and Such" or "I'll beat the digestive effluent out of So and So if they do this or that."

However, it seems that educators and social workers (not simply law enforcement) will play a role in determining what constitutes a substantial threat.

As a result of the leftwing women and the other assorted feminized types that dominate these respective professions, the threshold of what constitutes a threat of violence will likely be lowered considerably.

To this class of social engineers, a threat of violence can consist of little more than publicly suggesting that specified protected minorities should not be lavished with so many handouts and set asides.

In those of such diminished rationality, a threat can consist of nothing more than a man raising his voice at a woman in a scathing exchange actually instigated by the woman.

Should The Mental Health Establishment Mock The Overweight?

The December 2012 issue of *Monitor On Psychology* was about preventing obesity.

The masthead cartoon featured two witches standing outside a gingerbread house.

One turns to the other and remarks of the two portly youths meandering by, "Remember when we use to have to fatten the kids up first?"

As in regards to the November 2012 cartoon that mocked America's Pilgrim Forefathers in favor of the Native Indians, this one also raised a number of issues.

Will the magazine run a cartoon from the perspective of the children about witchcraft no longer being a deviant spirituality where its practitioners were once driven out of respectable society?

Secondly, if witches luring children in with candy to be cannibalized in a laughing matter, will the magazine also run cartoons soon poking fun of child molesters luring children into vans?

No Fly List's Lack Of Due Process Sets Dangerous Precedent

Regarding this proposed “No Gun List” that would parallel the “No Fly List”.

Will those placed upon it forbidden from purchasing firearms also be forbidden from knowing why they have been placed on it?

Terrorists and extremists also make extensive use of social media and related messaging technologies.

If Obama gets to take away your right to bear arms without the due process inherent to these kinds of lists, what is to prevent the government from summarily denying you access to the Internet?

How long until a No Vehicular Travel List is promulgated from the names on the No Fly List denying these persons access to the nation's roadways through electronic license plate readers and facial recognition technology?

How long until there is a No Food List promulgated from the names on the No Fly List to deny sustaining nutrition to those not in compliance with administration objectives and agendas?

What we are seeing is he who wishes he was the Beast laying the conceptual foundations for the actual Beast.

But Wasn't Christ Likely Immune From Ebola?

It was said in a sermon that we ought to let those with plagues such as leprosy touch us because Jesus allowed a leper to touch Him.

However, as the source of healing, it was doubtful Jesus was going to contract the debilitating illness.

Furthermore, was not the Triune Godhead the deity that implemented the regulations that, for lack of a better term, stigmatized those with that particular affliction?

As an illustration, the pulpiteer mentioned the time that he was touched by someone with a developmental disability.

However, unlike ebola, retardation is not communicable.

Pastor Insinuates Charity Doesn't Begin At Home

It was remarked from a pulpit that acts of kindness that you do for family because the person is related to you are not done from the standpoint of Christian love.

But so long as a deed is done for a person in a spirit of magnanimity, is God going to be that picky about it? What's the big deal if familial relationship is the primary motivating factor?

Doesn't God place most people in families for the purposes of taking care of these particular individuals?

Is it really more pious to travel halfway around the globe to take care of other elderly while your own are neglected?

Columnist Compares Candidate To The Son Of Perdition

In a commentary transcript, columnist Cal Thomas compared the rise of Donald Trump with the rise of the Anti-Christ.

The consideration of such is always good discernment on the part of an Evangelical public intellectual when a political figure begins to accumulate a devoted following..

However, out of curiosity, did this commentator make an as bold a statement regarding President Obama?

After all, there was a point when church worship bands and elementary school choruses alike were singing songs of praise in homage of the forty-fourth president.

Thomas observed that at one time a divorced man could not expect to be elected President but that Evangelicals are now comfortable with a candidate that has been married three times and can barely quote a single Bible verse.

But didn't Thomas himself help get this kind of ball rolling when he co-authored “Blinded By Might”?

In that work, Thomas advocated the thesis that Christians shouldn't really get that involved in politics.

Instead, believers ought to recognize a distinction between an individual's personal sense of piety and their ability to govern effectively.

Interesting how such a directive is rescinded as soon as average Christians are considering a candidate that does not spew the social justice platitudes infiltrating religious circles to an ever increasing degree.

Astute Parents Alert To Jihadist Intrusion

A Virginia school system shut down classes for a day over protests that erupted in response to a Geography assignment that would have required students to write in Arabic the fundamental Islamic statement of belief known as the shahada.

If Jews or Muslims rebuffed an assignment to write John 3:16 or "Jesus Is Lord", would the leftwing media formulate coverage of this story in such a manner so as to paint those standing up for their First Amendment rights against the state attempting to impose a particular religious perspective as the villains?

Students are rarely taught English penmanship these days.

So why is time being spent now in regards to what amounts to a Third World language?

Before progressives look down their haughty noses in condemnation at those seeming to oppose the celebration of pluralism, perhaps they ought to realize to what it was these parents were reacting.

In Islam, to be considered a Muslim, the primary requirement is to recite with conviction the disputed statement that the students would have been required to write.

That is, in essence, "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad was his prophet."

In the eyes of jihadists and allied extremists, if students sign their names to such a statement, is that considered a binding proclamation of conversion?

If so, should jihadists discover the names of students having completed this assignment reverting back to their Christian professions of faith and ways of life, what is to prevent fatwas from being drawn up calling for the violent execution of these unsuspecting pupils?

For the punishment regularly called upon those those leaving Islam for another faith is often death.

The parents noticing this subtle subversion of the public school system should not be looked down upon as unsophisticated rubes or rednecks.

Instead, they ought to be commended for exercising a degree of vigilance and discernment many in this day have been conditioned to overlook for fear of the reprisals that might be imposed for failing to surrender to the tyranny of political correctness.

The Christian & The Socratic Quest For Truth

Not well acquainted with the Western intellectual heritage, some Christians readily dismiss all philosophical endeavor because of the results arrived at by many ungodly thinkers seeking to elevate their own finite speculations above God's revelation. However, it must be remembered that all truth is God's truth. Made in the image of God, man can mirror to a small degree a portion of his Creator's rationality if he is seeking after that truth in an honest fashion.

It has been remarked that Western civilization owes its foundation to the two ancient cities of Jerusalem (representing Judeo-Christian theism) and Athens (representing Greek philosophical inquiry). And while the primacy of the Judeo-Christian contributions must not be forgotten as it represents God's direct relationship with man, the Athenian connection must not be forgotten either. For it represents man trying to come to grips with the world --- both the terrestrial and the human --- made by that divine Creator.

Ranking among the foremost of ancient Greek thinkers was the Athenian Socrates. It must be remembered that the thought of Socrates rested outside the accepted canons of orthodox Christianity.

For example, Socrates believed that man existed prior to his earthly incarnation. However, the idea professed by Socrates that absolute morality exists apart from human culture and convention has a great deal of truth about it.

Like the current era, those living in Athens during the time of Socrates found their culture awash in the chaos of moral relativism. This situation arose in part as a result of Sophist teaching.

The Sophists were a group of traveling teachers who would share their insights with those willing to pay, namely the well-to-do of the Athenian aristocracy. The Sophist worldview was epitomized by the following aphorism attributed to Protagoras, pivotal member of the movement: "Man is the measure of all things." This meant that man had to rely on his own experience with the highest arbiter of conduct being the collective conventions of any given reality and objective morality nonexistent.

Protagoras was not willing to live out the implications of his own ethical theorizing as he maintained that individuals ought to follow the practices of their own particular culture in order to guarantee social stability. The doctrines promulgated

by other Sophists were just as dangerously inconsistent.

Gorgias said truth did not exist nor could it be communicated. Apparently with the exception of this truth of course. Thrasymachus believed might did indeed make right.

It was in such an atmosphere that Socrates undertook his relentless pursuit of the truth in order that he might live what he termed "the good life", defined as living in such a way as to maximize virtue. He attempted to discover what constituted this morality by subjecting the truth claims propagated within his culture to careful scrutiny and reflection.

To Socrates, the knowledge of morality and truth were not merely intellectual commodities to be touted out to score points in public debates or used to pass the next philosophy exam. Similar to the Christian view of truth, knowledge of the ethical was to serve as the basis of action.

It was this conception of truth that Socrates sought after despite the hardships it eventually brought him. The events leading to the trial of Socrates occurred approximately 405 BC when Socrates as a member of the Committee of 500 refused to convict a number of generals accused of military negligence. The thoughtful sage reflected that to try the military leaders as a group violated the established judicial norms.

Throughout his trial for allegedly corrupting the Athenian youth, Socrates was confronted with several occasions where he could have escaped from authorities or played on their sympathies in order to spare his life. But instead Socrates let the truth stand on its own and accepted whatever consequences the defense of it brought.

Socrates' quest for morality and truth is to be commended, especially in light of the cultural conditions in which he found himself. However, the Christian must be careful when employing this thinker as an historical example worthy of personal emulation.

For starters, Socrates was only partially correct when he argued that individuals do evil because they do not know it is wrong. This might be true in some circumstances like when one eats an extra cupcake thinking it will be pure pleasure when in fact it ends up resulting in a stomachache. However, such is not always the case.

I Timothy 2:14 says, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Adam, therefore, fell into sin knowing full well what he was doing when he went against God's command not to eat the forbidden fruit.

Even though Socrates is to be commended for searching for the truth in light of the spiritual darkness that gripped Athens in the form of Sophist philosophy and pagan religion, that search was only partial at best. For Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life. If one's quest for truth is not to be washed away like the house built on the sandy shore mentioned in Matthew 7, it must ultimately be based upon Him.

Republican Elites Demand Americans Embrace Servile Acquiescence

The United States drifts further into decline.

However, don't expect establishmentarian Republicans to do anything about it.

It seems the party's foremost luminaries and rising stars are more concerned about maintaining the go along to get along mentality that has brought the nation to the precipice of collapse.

This was evident in South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley's response to the 2016 State of the Union Address.

The party has grown so weak and tepid that it was suggested on the WMAL morning show in Washington that some debated the propriety of even referring to this short oration as "Republican" for fear of appearing too partisan.

In her remarks, Haley insisted that, "Some people think that you have to be the loudest voice in the room to make a difference. That is just not true. Often, the best thing we do is turn down the volume. When the sound is quieter, you can actually hear what someone else is saying. And that can make a world of difference."

The Scripture does counsel that a soft answer can turn away wrath and can make a world of difference in terms of personal relationships.

But what is being suggested by Governor Haley is that, while subversives threaten violence and destroy private property in pursuit of assorted radical agendas, once again the so-called "Silent Majority" really ought to remain quiet and continue to be walked all over.

As an example of the path she suggests to utopia, Governor Haley uplifted the response to the terrorist madman that murdered those assembled for prayer at the Charleston church prayer group.

The end result of that tragedy that Governor Haley

is the most proud of is not necessarily the aversion of widespread looting but rather the removal of the Confederate Battle Flag from South Carolina state property.

But was this move not the epitome of the loudest voices being triumphant in terms of determining the course of public policy?

For it is doubtful that workaday South Carolinians had the final say in this decision.

Rather, as with many of the others made across the various levels of government and throughout influential social institutions, this one was no doubt the result of activist leeches not even living in the particular jurisdiction that threaten to burn entire cities to the ground if you so much as look askance in their direction working in tandem with nefarious elites attempting to implement a globalist New World Order.

In her remarks, Governor Haley assured, "No one who is willing to work hard, abide by our laws, and love our traditions should ever feel unwelcome in this country."

Too bad this sentiment no longer seems to apply to you anymore unless your progenitors just got off of the boat or have wads of cash large enough to pay your way into an assortment of secret societies.

Random Observations

Rochester, New York canceled New Year fireworks for fear of terrorism. How many other holiday celebrations will be canceled in the years ahead over similarly fabricated threats? The same bureaucrats pulling this stunt probably support open borders and refuge relocation.

Religious hucksters Kenneth Copeland and Jesse Duplantis insist that they retain access to their private jetliners in order to protect these ministers from the demonic entities that apparently prefer to fly in coach. So what about the remainder of we mere pewfillers? If this really was the case, instead of hogging this opulent form of travel for themselves, wouldn't true men of God instead open some kind of charter flight service for traveling Christians?

Is there a reason that we should be outraged over the White House spying on members of Congress and visiting foreign dignitaries when media propagandists and administration functionaries constantly harp that those not celebrating the diminution of individual privacy are mentally deficient to the point of political subversion?

It is claimed in an anti-bullying public service announcement featuring a number of ABC celebrities that there is not one correct way to be. As such, kindness is urged. But isn't that an assertion that there is indeed a correct way to be?

It is being suggested that additional taxation be levied to battle the ISIS threat. If additional revenue is required, that is an admission that the taxes that have been collected are not being utilized effectively. So why shouldn't we conclude that a so-called "ISIS tax" won't be similarly squandered?

Apparently a militia group has occupied an Oregon wildlife refuge. And that is worse than the antics of the Occupy movement or Black Lives Matter why?

In terms of the Clinton Foundation, Hillary insisted in 2009 that she or her husband accrue no financial interest in the charity. As if couple live in such a state of destitution that the hookers Bill must settle for are the toothless meth addicts with the sunken in faces.

Did police drag their feet in bringing Bill Cosby to justice because he is a Freemason?

Unlike Black Lives Matter, the "Bundy Militia" occupying a federal wildlife refuge in Oregon have yet to loot haircare products, smartphones or destroyed any property. Will Southern Baptist functionaries Russell Moore plead now for the need to understand the plight of rural Caucasians and why urbanites need to beseech the forgiveness from the Almighty for the wrong perpetrated against that particular demographic?

Under the Obama regime gun control executive directives, certain individuals on Social Security could potentially be denied their Second Amendment rights. Is that so they won't be put up much resistance when the Healthcare Reform Act death panels come for them?

At the CNN gun control forum, President Obama counseled that at best firearms only protect those that they are intended to protect only in a few instances. More often, these implements end up injuring those that they are intended to protect. If so, for the President's sake, shouldn't the Secret Service be disarmed?

The network ABC Family is changing its name to "Freeform". The executives must really want to broadcast some debauched and bawdy programming with out attracting the sarcastic scrutiny that would likely result from the name "Family" still being attached.

Will the ecclesiastical potentates in the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops opposing America's "cowboy culture" and applauding President Obama's dictatorial gun control proposals call upon the Vatican to set a planetary example by disbanding the Pope's heavily armed Swiss guards?

Ted Cruz assured that law is not enforced in America with jackboots. The Branch Davidians, Randy Weaver, and the extended family of Elion Gonzalez might suggest otherwise.

Rand Paul refused to accept his demotion to the second tier debate on Fox Business Network. By this point in the game, do that many even care?

Montgomery County, Maryland Executive Ike Legget assured that he would not cooperate in the deportation of illegal residents. Shouldn't the same liberals that applauded the imprisonment of Kentucky court clerk Kim Davis for failing to uphold the implementation of assorted judicial rulings regarding gay marriage now be calling for the incarceration of this rogue municipal functionary as well?

In light of the Black thespians flying into histrionics over those bestowing Hollywood accolades being predominately White, how is that much different than those pitching a fit suggesting the the media is controlled by Jews?

In the State of the Union, President Obama insisted that Food Stamp recipients did not cause the financial crisis. Maybe not. However, it is not a sign of cultural or economic health when ghetto sows in there 20's get $2000 per month in Social Security disability and nearly another $1000 to go towards their subsidized housing which they still refuse to pay for because they don't like it that the landlord did not get around to fixing the latch on the mailbox in a timely manner.

Will those condemning Ted Cruz's remarks regarding "New York values" get as jacked out of shape regarding Gov. Cumo insisting there is no place for you in New York unless you are in spirit a baby killer and moral deviant. Isn't that more in keeping with the totalitarian nature of Anti-Semiticism and its desire to liquidate whole scale populations than to make observations regarding those with disproportionate sway over media and finance.

In the inaugural edition of his podcast "Signposts", Russell Moore bashed those invoking Scripture as evidence of their apocalyptic catastrophism. Defective in certain regards as such a hermeneutic might be, isn't it still more a more accurate interpretation than Moore's own variety of progressivist social gospelism?

An MSNBC headline reporting arguments before the Supreme Court regarding compulsory union fees states, "Religious Freedom Used To Weaponize The First Amendment". But how is that different than when the First Amendment is invoked to justify rampaging mobs looting businesses following an unpopular jury verdict or to financially ruin businesses that refuse to applaud the state-sanctioned solemnization of moral licentiousness?

Obama Condemns Cynicism As Counterrevolutionary

In the State of the Union, President Obama admonished that democracy "doesn't work if we think people who disagree with us are all motivated by malice,...are unpatriotic, or trying to weaken America."

How else do you describe those that rampage in the streets destroying property over a trial verdict with which they disagree.

Was not President Obama the one that told his supporters to get into the faces of those with which they disagree and to make the holiday's miserable of counterrevolutionary family members that dare to vocalize sentiments not in compliance with prevailing multiculturalist dogmas?

Wasn't President Obama that suggested that leftwing Hispanics should punish their political enemies that failed to embrace a progressivist agenda?

In the State of the Union, President Obama went on to say, "We need every American to stay active in our public life and not just during election time."

Does this include those that he accused of clinging bitterly to both their God and their guns?

Would Fox Anchor Bash *Star Wars* If Still Owned By His Corporate Master?

Regarding those that attended the premiere of "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" in costumed regalia, Neil Cavuto of Fox News remarked such was a symptom of the end of civilization as we know it.

Maybe so.

But was he as blunt in his condemnation of gay matrimony?

Isn't the usual modus operandi of the economic wing of Fox News to determine the rightness or wrongness of a thing by calculating the wad of money it has accrued?

For example, the network's approval of pee wee football coaches verbally degrading the tykes playing under them?

So why are Star Wars fans more condemnable than out of control sports enthusiasts?

Would Cavuto ridicule the film to the same extent if Star Wars was still owned by his corporate overlords at Fox rather than Disney?

Why Not Make A Statement In Favor Of Traditional Marriage?

Representative Jim Jordan insisted that he was not trying to make some kind of statement by inviting Kentucky County Clerk Kim Davis to the State of the Union.

And what if he was?

How could it be any worse than jihadist sympathizer Nezar Hamze being invited to Representative Alcee Hastings to attend this event?

Even if you disagree with Davis' refusal to issue marriage licenses to gay couples, to remain a consistent liberal, don't you have to admit such a transgression pales in comparison to teaching small weapons usage at a mosque where the clergy were accused of funneling funds to the Pakistani Taliban?

Pastor Opposed To Star Wars Certainly Knows A Lot About The Series

In his tirade against Star Wars, Pastor Jason Cooley was introduced by the Darth Vader theme.

If Star Wars is so wicked, isn't that analogous to playing the stripper theme or Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On" when discussing modesty or fornication?

If Christians are to remain separate from these entertainments as Pastor Cooley suggests, how are they expected to understand the references Pastor Cooley makes such as the theme "The Jeffersons" or even the "You will be assimilated" of the Borg from Star Trek?

Strangers At The Door Don't Deserve Detailed Explanations

In a commercial for a wifi video doorbell, a man rings the device.

A woman depicted at a cafe replies she's busy bathing the children at the moment.

The conspicuously pious will fly into conniptions how this woman is guilty of bearing false witness.

But there is a more important concern regarding her response.

Wouldn't her response indicate to a potential assailant or predator that she is home alone unprotected with defenseless urchins?

Where is there any requirement that you are obligated to open a door or to provide a reason as to why you are not to someone that you do not know?

Obama Praises Economic Indolence

In the State of the Union, President Obama insisted that Food Stamp recipients did not cause the financial crisis.

Maybe not.

However, it is not a sign of cultural or economic health when ghetto sows in there 20's get $2000 per month in Social Security disability and nearly another $1000 to go towards their subsidized housing which they still refuse to pay for because they don't like it that the landlord did not get around to fixing the latch on the mailbox in a timely manner.

Pastors Commonly Misinterpret Story Of Gideon

In the account of Gideon elaborated in Judges 6, Gideon's army was divided along the lines of those that knelt over to drink and those that cupped the water in their hands.

Isn't it a bit much to insist that the hand drinkers were somehow superior to the slurpers?

There does not seem to be anything to indicate in the Scriptures that the slurping of water was somehow forbidden in the Mosaic code.

The response for generations throughout the history of homiletics has been that those drinking with their hands possessed what today is termed situational awareness.

Maybe so.

But at each step of the winnowing process, wasn't God attempting to prevent the nation of Israel from finding a basis upon which they could congratulate themselves for victory against the Midianites?

God simply needed a criteria by which to reduce the assembled throng down to His required number.

The fuss that has been made over the hand drinkers from the pulpit over the years is akin to suggesting that the twelve impaneled on a jury are better from a moral standpoint than the remainder of the summoned pool.

Retiring Episcopal Hierarch Calls For Communist Upheaval

In reflection on her term as the presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church posted at YouTube, Katharine Schori said that the reign of God would look like a society where there is justice in the sense that nobody lives in want and nobody has too much.

Given that the apostate wing of Anglicanism isn't exactly known for its apocalyptic millennialism or even a literalist interpretation where these eschatological expectations can only be fulfilled at the

Second Advent of Christ's return, such a statement ought to be a cause for concern.

There is little reason to object to the aspiration of everybody being free from want provided they lift a finger of their own to some degree in pursuit of this ideal.

However, without Christ Himself on scene to render such a verdict, who is to say what constitutes “too much”?

Might “too much” be the ostentatious vestments and silly hats many belonging to this retired bishop's particular denomination like to prance about in?

If these functionaries really cared about the equitable distribution of recourses, they could still solemnly fulfill the requirements of their ritual and liturgy in little more than a collared clergy shirt running not more than $50 online.

More importantly, how are those that “don't have enough” necessarily negatively impacted by my having “too much”?

What if one has more simply because one has been a better steward of what one has been blessed?

Southern Baptist Condemns Trump For Failing To Pander To Women & Minorities

James 1:8 warns that a double minded man is unstable in all that he does. Few religious leaders on the scene today typifies what this Scripture is getting at as Southern Baptist ethics and public policy functionary Russell Moore.

In an op-ed published in the New York Times, this theologian wrote, “Donald J. Trump stands astride the polls in the Republican presidential race... Most illogical is his support from evangelicals and other social conservatives. To back Mr. Trump, these voters must repudiate everything they believe.”

As not only a graduate of the Southern Baptist Convention's most prestigious seminary but also as a professor at the school as well, shouldn't Dr. Moore know that words mean things? Some possess very precise definitions.

In academic writing courses such as the infamous English 101, one of the first things students learn is to be cautious when applying words such as “all”. For if your opponent can find as few as a single counterexample, they have pretty much derailed your argument.

However, in his fanaticism, Rev. Moore insists that to vote for Donald Trump is to repudiate everything which the Christian professes to believe. But casting a ballot for a limited number of reasons barely touches on any essential Christian doctrine.

Granted, there was one off his rocker Charismatic or holy roller that attempted to make the eschatological case that Trump was the trump to be blown in the Book of Revelation. However, at no time has a Christian holding to an orthodox

understanding or interpretation who also supports the Trump candidacy renounced the so-called fundamentals of the Gospel message. These would of course be that Christ as the only begotten Son of God and second member of the divine trinity took on human form being born of a virgin so that He might live the sinless life that we could not in order to die upon the cross and rise from the dead as payment for our sins so that those that might believe in Him could enjoy eternal resurrected life with Him in Heaven.

In his analysis, Rev. Moore raises of number of valid concerns regarding Donald Trump's moral shortcomings and failures. Of Trump's behavior towards women, Moore writes, "His attitude towards women is that of a Bronze Age warlord. He tell us in one of his books that he revels in the fact that he gets to sleep with some of the top women in the world. He has divorced two wives (so far) for other women."

Such should give the Christian striving to live up to the rigors of Biblical morality cause for concern. However, to categorize Trump's attitude as that of a "Bronze Age warlord" is a bit over the top.
It is probably safe to assume at no time did Donald Trump impose his physical affections upon women that were not receptive to his amorous advances. As a multibillionaire, he'd probably have too much to loose in a post-Anita Hill era where rumors and allegations are too easily believed.

Unless these are rape victims, aren't these wenches as every bit the depraved whoremonger as Donald Trump? Just as Donald Trump prides himself on his carnal conquests, the women he has bestowed the honor of pleasuring him carnally have probably have had their own egos stroked (along with a few other things) by the fact that a man of his wealth and power would extend to them this kind of attention.

As an archetypal capitalist, Trump is probably quite good to these women from a material standpoint. These aren't the aging church biddies with so much hairspray that their beehives or bouffants would likely catch afire should they wander to close to an open flame. Those operating in Trump's circles know what they are getting into when they catch his eye and likely even seek out that kind of attention from the likes of him.

If Dr. Moore is going to condemn Bronze Age mentalities towards women, does he intend to criticize some of the teachings propagated by the likes of the Duggar's? For example, of that family's twenty some children, does Dr. Moore find it strange that not a single one has really attempted a college education?

And what about the teaching emanating from the Duggar compound that even a pregnant wife is obligated to physically service her husband anytime he awakens in the middle of the night with an urge or an itch?

Russell Moore further writes, "In the 1990's, some of these social conservatives argued that 'If Bill Clinton's wife can't trust him, neither can we.' If character matters, character matters. Today's evangelicals should ask, 'Whatever happened to our commitment to traditional family values?'."

In part, that once strong conviction was been undermined by self-styled sophisticates such as Russell Moore positioned higher along the ladder of ecclesastical position that go out of their way to enunciate their contempt upon those seen as mere pewfillers with little purpose other than depositing coins in the collection plate when so ordered. In other columns, Rev. Moore has gone out of his way to express a giddy delight at the demise of so-called "cultural Christianity", described as an interpretation of the faith more concerned with the preservation of the social norms derived from the faith perhaps at times even more so than the relationship between the individual and the Savior.

However, what Moore has criticized in such cases is apparently not so much activist Christianity. For he certainly has little problem with advancing policies that perpetuate his own perceptions of White guilt bordering on that exhibited among the ranks of the Emergent Church Movement.

Dr. Moore writes, "Mr. Trump incites division, with slurs against Hispanic immigrants and with protectionist jargon that preys on turning economic insecurity into ugly 'us" versus 'them' identity politics. When evangelicals should be leading the way on racial reconciliation, as the Bible tells us to, are we really ready to trade unity with our black and brown brothers...for this angry politician?"

Regarding "protectionist jargon", would Russell Moore be as giddy at the prospect of foreign labor depressing what are no doubt his own extravagant wages and posh expense accounts? Like many a hillbilly pastor, Russell Moore can no doubt prattle on for hours about how hard he probably toiled in the cotton fields, bayous, or coal mines.

But only in his mid 40's, it is doubtful much dirt has accumulated under his manicured fingernails or callouses formed on his hands. The most profound physical strain Dr. Moore has encountered in his occupational position as of late has probably been an occasional paper cut.

Perhaps we mere pewfillers ought to embrace Dr.

Moore's call for stagnate or declining wages. It would mean, after all, fewer dollars that we would be required to be slipped into the collection plate.

From his own actions, Russell Moore's call for racial reconciliation amounts to little more than aligning himself with Evangelical front groups that deep down advocate their own distinct hue of racial separatism at best or ethnosupremacism at worst in that (to put it in a plainspoken manner) despise the White race (or however else you want to describe Caucasoids in this era where whatever flies out of the mouth of someone of that demographic extraction attempting to stand for their particular people or heritage will be coopted in order to indict the enucinator with allegations of hate speech or thought crimes).

For example, Russell Moore sits on the board of the National Hispanic Leadership Conference. Of that, the discerning believer ought to ask a number of questions that in today's climate could result in either losing their position as a Sunday school teacher or deacon and might even lead to their church membership being revoked.

Firstly, would a group of that name open its positions of leadership to individuals advocating a Buchananite foreign or immigration policy? If not, how are these sectarians any better than the ministries that focus upon family values such as abortion or the preservation of heterosexual marriage now condemned as divisive by the religious progressives that applaud ethnic and racialist agitation?

Secondly and perhaps even more importantly, would Russell Moore sit on the board of an organization titled something like the Coalition For Nordic or Teutonic Evangelicals? If not, why should such an organization be any less commendable than one advocating that someone is deserving of special praise, adulation, or accommodation just because they happen to be Hispanic?

Interesting, isn't it, that the Scripture that there is neither Greek nor Jew is only presented for exegetical contemplation when it can be invoked to criticize the tendency of Whites to gravitate towards others of their own particular phenotype? The admonition is conveniently overlooked when certain grievance industry minorities have no problem with judging someone by the color of skin rather than by the content of character.

There are indeed a number of reasons to be concerned regarding a potential Trump Presidency. Without a doubt, this tycoon excels at expressing many of the concerns and frustrations weighing on the hearts and minds of average Americans. However, many of his proposals and solutions seem lacking in the specifics that would be needed to get the country from the state of crisis in which we presently find ourselves to the more solid footing Donald Trump promises in a manner that would adhere to the liberties and procedures of a constitutional republic while minimizing the social disruption that would likely result from a dramatic alteration in governmental policy and approach.

Apparently Russell Moore intends to posture and preen in an attempt to acquire accolades for himself from progressives by heaping condemnation upon those giving what Donald Trump has to say a serious hearing. In his reflection, perhaps Russell Moore ought to as seriously reflect upon the role he himself has played in propagating a milieu where many Americans no longer feel as if they have a place any longer in either this country or even the church.

A Close Encounter Of An Intravenous Kind

"Quick. Look Outside!"

"What?" I replied to my brother.

My brother responded, "LOOK OUTSIDE."

I rushed to the door and opened it. "I don't see anything."

My brother's voice grew increasingly agitated. "Up in the sky and down the street."

I stepped out a bit onto the front porch, lifting my gaze upward. Still accustomed to the indoor illumination, my vision had not yet adjusted to the unbridled sunlight.

"I don't see anything but clouds."

"Keep looking. You will see it," my brother snapped.

Despite growing frustration at my brother's tone, I continued as he insisted. After a few more moments, my eyes finally noticed what it was my sibling had been so insistent about.

Its outline nearly matched the clouds in the background in terms of color. However, if one stared with sufficient intent, one could make out the faint hint of a metallic curvature.

My heart palpitated. It couldn't be. But it apparently was. "Oh myyyy....Is that a UFO?"

"No way," my brother replied, almost dismissively.

"That's a UFO." My limbs growing unsteady as I

contemplated the import of my words.

My brother retorted, “You just want it to be a UFO because you believe they exist.”

“And why do you need to be so skeptical? If you don't believe that's a UFO, why did you bother me with this?”, I replied.

To that, he had no answer. It was difficult to transcend the overwhelming sense of dumbfoundedness that washed over the psyche as one contemplated the significance of the image seemingly floating there in the sky.

“It's just dangling there, “ my bother observed, “even though you can see right through it.”

I hypothesized, “It probably doesn't even have any physical substance.”

“You mean like an illusion?”

“Not exactly. I mean it's probably spiritual, slipping through from another dimension.”

My brother still did not want to concede to the validity of my speculations. But with no other explanations for what he was seeing with his very own eyes, he enunciated no further protests.

Curious onlookers began to gather, wondering what it was suspended in the sky. Arms and hands gestured upward.

The bottom of the translucent metallic outline slowly opened. A beam of light extended downward to the blacktopped street below.

My eyes widened. I walked down a few steps, wanting a closer look but trepidatious regarding the mysterious phenomena unfolding before me.

Apparently I wasn't quite as excited as the assembling throng. Though they were probably halfway down the street, one could still hear their enthusiastic yammering.

I descended to at least the bottom of the steps. From there, I would at least have a better view but be close enough to hurry back into the house if something dangerous was to transpire or something over which one would need a degree of plausible deniability if men adorned in certain downplayed hues came knocking to ascertain just how much individuals had witnessed.

A form slowly yet steadily descended through the bottom of what most would categorize as a spaceship or flying saucer. The gasps of the onlookers grew even louder.

The protrusion was a pasty gray, almost like clay in coloration. The end of this tubular extension flicked back and forth in an obviously serpentine manner.

But as the creature emerged from the craft, it became apparent that it was not entirely cylindrical. Two spindly arms branched off the upper sides of the torso. These appendages were held outstretched.

Given my religious background, it almost seemed as if the entity was posing in a crucified posture. To others, it could have just as easily suggested, “Come unto me all that are weary so that you may find rest.”

As the creature lowered itself in the tractor beam to the street below, that was exactly what the gathered began to do. A stretcher with a patient upon it was slowly pushed through the crowd.

The assembled could now see some kind of tube dangling from the entity's outstretched limb. A dark, viscous fluid dripped from it into what appeared to be a plastic collection bag.

Intrigued, I squinted to get a better glimpse of the spectacle unfolding before me. I informed my sibling, “That must be that abomination's blood. He's making it appear as if he is shedding his blood for them.” My brother simply deferred to my observation and analysis.

The entity look down at the convalescent reclining upon the gurney. What might pass as an expression of sympathy or pity formed on its nearly colorless face.

Medical personnel quickly took the tube dangling beneath the lifeform's extended appendage and attached it to the convalescent's arm. The dark, viscous fluid oozed into the patient's body.

The gathered observed in reverent anticipation. They barely said a word, but the attentive could still hear the audible gasps and sighs.

The invalid began to stir. Vitality returned to the previously near-lifeless body at a steady pace.

Eventually, the joyous person sat up in amazement under his own strength. He hopped to his feet with the enthusiasm of someone that had not been able to accomplish such a simple gesture in what seemed to him no doubt ages.

Cheers of adulation erupted. The hovering serpentine entity looked down and offered what it could of a smile. It looked upward as it ascended the tractor beam back through the bottom of the ethereal saucer.

Still watching from a distance, I turned to my brother and observed, “I bet the cost of that doesn't come cheap. And it will probably end up being a price we will all be forced to pay whether we want to or not.”

About The Author:
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